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Message Text

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11
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-20 IO-13 NIC-01 EA-11 ACDA-19

RSR-01 /172 W
---------- 126627
R 190630Z JUL 73
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 131
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 5835

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PK, AF
SUBJ: AFGHAN COUP: GOP VIEWS

REF: ISLAMABAD 5813

SUMMARY: SENIOR MFA OFFICIAL STATES THAT GOP INTENDS KEEP "OPEN MIND" RE DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN. GOP STILL OUT OF TOUCH WITH PAK EMBASSY IN KABUL. INITIAL EDITORIAL COMMENT IN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS EX-PRESSES HOPE NEW AFGHAN GOVERNMENT WILL RESIST TEMPTATION EXPLOIT PUSHTUNISTAN. END SUMMARY.

1. ACTING FONSEC ALTAF SHAIKH, DISCUSSING AFGHAN COUP, TOLD POL COUNSELOR EVENING JULY 18 THAT GOP WAS NATURALLY CONCERNED WITH SARDAR DAUD'S SEIZURE OF POWER BUT INTENDED TO KEEP AN "OPEN MIND" WITH REGARD DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN. GOP HAD CONFINED SELF
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TO RESTRAINED PUBLIC STATEMENT ON COUP, HE SAID, AND

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HAD PASSED WORD TO PRESS THAT IT SHOULD EXERCISE RE-
STRAINT IN REPORTING AFGHAN NEWS. SHAIKH DECLINED
SPECULATE ON IMPLICATIONS OF COUP FOR PAKISTAN, OB-
SERVING THAT GOP FELT IT BEST AWAIT DEVELOPMENTS RATHER
THAN LEAPING TO CONCLUSIONS.

2. SHAIKH EXPRESSED DEEP APPRECIATION FOR INFO EMBASSY
HAD PASSED TO MFA REGARDING AFGHAN DEVELOPMENTS
(ISLAMABAD 5809), SAYING THAT IT WAS VIRTUALLY ONLY
FIRST-HAND NEWS GOP HAD RECEIVED DURING EARLY STAGES
OF COUP. HE EXPLAINED THAT PAK EMBASSY IN KABUL HAD
NEVER BEEN "PERMITTED" TO INSTALL RADIO EQUIPMENT AND
HAD RELIED ON TELEPHONE AND COMMERCIAL TELEGRAPH FOR
COMMUNICATIONS WITH ISLAMABAD. WITH LATTER FACILITIES
STILL NOT FUNCTIONING, MFA REMAINED CUT OFF FROM ITS
KABUL EMBASSY.

3. COUP STORY WAS HEADLINED IN LOCAL PRESS JULY 18
AND 19. EXCEPT FOR JANG ITEM (ISLAMABAD 5809) AND ONE
OR TWO OTHER SENSATIONAL STORIES IN NON-GOVERNMENT
PAPERS, PRESS HAS CONFINED SELF TO RELATIVELY RESTRAINED
FACTUAL REPORTING.

4. INITIAL EDITORIAL IN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED
PAKISTAN TIMES JULY 19 STRUCK SOMBER NOTE. IT OBSERVED
THAT COUP RAISED NUMBER OF QUESTIONS, INCLUDING MOTIVATION
OF PLOTTERS, PART PLAYED BY EXTERNAL FACTORS IF ANY,
AND REASON WHY PRIVILEGED HITHERTO NON-POLITICAL ARMY
HAD INJECTED SELF INTO POLITICS. EDITORIAL SAID THAT
NEW AFGHAN RULERS WILL NEED A "LOT OF LUCK" TO RUN
COUNTRY IN VIEW OF STRONG TRIBAL LOYALTIES AND
ELIMINATION OF THRONE AS UNIFYING FACTOR. AFGHANISTAN'S
NEIGHBORS WOULD BE WATCHING CAREFULLY TO SEE HOW NEW
GOVERNMENT'S AVOWED POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT WAS TO BE
APPLIED, PAPER SAID. "NOTHING WOULD BE MORE DISTURBING
THAN THAT THIS COUNTRY SHOULD BECOME THE COCKPIT OF
BIG-POWER CONFLICT OR FALL UNDER THE POWER PENUMBRA OF
ANY GREAT POWER. THIS WOULD BE A NEGATION OF THE
DEMONCRATIC ASPERATIONS OF THE VALIANT, SELF-RESPECTING
AFGHANS".
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5. CONCLUDING, EDITORIAL EXPRESSED DISMAY THAT SARDAR
DAUD INCLUDED "UNCOMPLIMENTARY" REFERENCE TO PAKISTAN
IN HIS FIRST BROADCAST. FACT WAS, PAPER ASSERTED,
THAT PAKISTAN HAD NO POLITICAL DISPUTE WITH AFGHANISTAN
SINCE PUSHTUNISTAN ISSI WAS BURIED IN 1963. "WE HOPE
THAT THE NEW RULERS WILL RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO RAISE
THE 'ISSUE' AGAIN, HOWEVER MUCH THEY MIGHT NEED SOME-

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THING HANDY TO DIVERT CRITICAL PUBLIC OPINION AT HOME". EDITORIAL ENDED WITH SUGGESTION THAT IT WOULD BE IN AFGHANISTAN'S OWN NATIONAL INTEREST TO FORGE CLOSER REALATIONS WITH PAKISTAN "IN KEEPING WITH THE DICTATES OF REGIONAL PEACE AND FREEDOM FROM FOREIGN HEGEMONY".

6. IN OTHER EDITORIAL COMMENT, PRO-GOVERNMENT URDU LANGUAGE TAMEER JULY 18 EXPRESSAR PLEASURE OVER ABOLITION OF MONARCHY IN AFGHANISTAN BUT WORRIED THAT EMERGENCE OF SARDAR DAUD AS LEADER OF REVOLUTION MIGHT INDICATE ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY EXTREME PRO-RUSSIAN ELEMENTS. INDEPENDENT URDU LANGUAGE JANG EXPRESSED HOPE FOR PROS-PERITY OF AFGHAN PEOPLE UNDER NEW REGIME. URGED NEW RULERS TO DO AWAY WITH MARTIAL LAW SOON AS POSSIBLE AND BEGIN INTRODUCING DEMOCRACY. PAPER SUGGESTED GOP EXPLORE AVENUES FCOOPERATION WITH NEW REGIME, ESPECIALLY IN ECONOMIC FIELD.
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